

REMARKS

Claims 50-70 are currently pending, although claims 68-70 have been withdrawn. Upon indication of allowable subject matter, Applicants currently intend to seek rejoinder of at least one of the withdrawn claims as appropriate. It is noted that Claims 68-70 depend on Claim 63, directly or indirectly.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for withdrawing all previous prior art rejections of record.

The Examiner has request applicants cooperation with respect to the specification. Applicants are not aware of any typographical errors. The status of parent applications is mentioned in the Application Data Sheet. Thus, no further action regarding the specification is required at this point.

The Office Action rejected claims 50-60 and 63-67 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over U.S. patent 3,257,310 (“Plank et al”). In view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

The claimed invention relates to processes where the solid material separated from its mother liquor is calcined prior to subjecting the solid material (or shaped body obtained from the solid material) to the required water treatment. Also, the claimed invention requires at least partial crystallization of the solid material prior to the required water treatment. The claimed invention relates to processes (or products obtained by such processes) in which template compounds are removed from solid material (by calcination) prior to the required water treatment. The claims state that the solid material or the shaped body is brought in

contact with deionized water at a temperature between 120°C and 175°C for a duration of 12 to 24 hours. The applied art neither teaches nor suggests this invention.

The present invention is distinguished from Plank et al. (US 3,257,310) by the specific temperature range employed for the treatment step using deionized water. In particular, the temperature range of 400°F to 1450°F taught in Plank et al. with respect to a steam treatment regimen corresponds to temperatures in °C ranging from 204°C to 788°C, such that said range actually does not overlap with the claimed range of 120°C to 175°C; In addition, the claimed treatment with deionized water has a the duration of from 12 to 24 hours.

One problem of the present invention is to provide a process for producing a solid material or a shaped body containing at least one zeolite, wherein said process provides a material having improved catalytic performance characteristics (description: see page 2, ln. 6-9). Said object is respectively achieved by the integrated processes according to Claims 50, 54, and 57, in addition to the solid material as defined in claim 63. In particular, it has surprisingly been found that by applying at least one step of contacting a zeolite containing material or shaped body with deionized water at a temperature between 120°C and 175°C for a duration of 12 to 24 hours, an epoxidation catalyst is obtained having a significantly improved long-term selectivity towards propylene oxide, as well as displaying lower rates of oxygen formation compared to the untreated material (see Example 3 and the comparative example on pages 23 and 24, respectively).

Furthermore, there is no disclosure or suggestion whatsoever in Plank et al. which would point to the solution of the present invention. In particular, Plank et al. actually teaches away from the present invention since temperatures comprised in the range of from

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1200°F to 1300°F corresponding to 649°C to 704°C are taught in the particularly preferred embodiments described therein (see Examples 3-27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, and 45 as displayed in Tables I-X, the remaining comparative examples not including a steam treatment regimen). Consequently, Plank et al. contains no disclosure or suggestion whatsoever which would have motivated a person skilled in the art to apply the specific treatment methodology of the present invention as defined in the claimed subject-matter.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance. Prompt and favorable consideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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